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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General appeals for end to armed activities on Tajik-Afghan border; says United Nations will help parties find peaceful solution to problems. Meanwhile, Russian Federation appeals to Afghanistan to prevent attacks on Russian border troops in Tajikistan.

+ Co-Chairmen of Yugoslavia Conference invite Bosnian President and Bosnian Croat and Serb leaders to Geneva to negotiate end to war in Bosnia and Herzegovina; say outstanding issues have been clarified and parties should meet in continuous session until settlement reached.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs complains of insufficient funding for relief and reconstruction in Somalia; warns that UNOSOM II military actions in Mogadishu could lead to "marginalization" of humanitarian work elsewhere in country.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations says UNOSOM II has not departed from its mandate by becoming military operation; security is sine qua non for achieving humanitarian and political objectives.

+ Special Committee against Apartheid appeals to Conservative Party and Inkatha Freedom Party not to leave multiparty talks; says talks could lay foundation for new constitution for democratic and non-racial South Africa.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appealed to the parties to the conflict on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan to exercise restraint, to end all armed activities and to seek a political solution. In a statement issued today by a United Nations spokesman, the Secretary-General emphasized that he and his Special Envoy were ready to assist the parties in their efforts to find a peaceful solution to their problems.

Meanwhile, the Russian Federation has issued a strong protest to Afghanistan in connection with an attack on Russian border troops in

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Tajikistan on 13 July. In a letter to the Secretary-General dated 19 July, the Russian Federation said the attack had been launched from Afghan territory by irregular forces of the Tajik opposition and Afghan Mujahidin, and appealed urgently to Afghanistan to take all necessary measures to prevent such actions in the future.

Russian troops in Tajikistan would use "the entire arsenal of military means available" to protect the Tajik-Afghan frontier, according to the letter. The Russian Federation would also provide Tajikistan with any assistance it might require, including military assistance, in accordance with a Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance signed by the two countries and on the basis of the right to collective defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. The letter went on to say that the international community must adopt a responsible approach to those forces which violated the norms of international law, infringed Tajikistan's territorial integrity and sovereignty, and threatened the stability and security of the entire central Asian region.

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The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, have invited Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban, and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to Geneva to negotiate a settlement to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Co-Chairmen said in a letter to the three leaders that the outstanding issues had been clarified in recent weeks and that they should meet in continuous session until a settlement was reached.

The Presidents of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro had already said they would participate in the negotiations when that would be helpful, the Co-Chairmen noted, adding that the presence of the collective Bosnian Presidency would be beneficial. The armed forces of all parties should exercise maximum restraint in order to ensure the best atmosphere for the negotiations. The letter reminded the parties of their commitment to ensure the availability of electricity and water in all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and unhindered access for humanitarian convoys.

The Co-Chairmen said that if fighting resumed or humanitarian relief were impeded at any time, they would say so publicly and make it clear who was responsible for jeopardizing the negotiations. "We look forward to seeing you at the end of the week", the letter concluded.

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Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Jan Eliasson today said that the amount of funding made available for relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Somalia was disappointingly low, even though those efforts were central to the United Nations mission in the country. To date, less than 15 per cent of funding needed for the 1993 Relief and Rehabilitation Programme -- $166 million -- had been received, while some $1.5 billion would be spent on military operations over the year, he told the Economic and Social

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Council in Geneva. In other words, ten dollars was being spent on security in Somalia for every dollar spent on humanitarian assistance.

Mr. Eliasson warned that if sufficient funding were not received, the military operation might be perceived as an end in itself, rather than as a means of ensuring security for rehabilitation and reconstruction. The recent escalation of violence could not be allowed to wreck that work, and vicious attacks on United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) peace-keepers could not be disregarded. However, he continued, there were genuine concerns that continued military actions in Mogadishu could result in the marginalization of the humanitarian dimension of the Organization's mission in the country.

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The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) has not detracted from its original mandate by becoming a military operation, and is continuing to pursue its humanitarian and political objectives, Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations Kofi Annan told a UNOSOM II Troop Contributors Meeting today. He said the process of disarmament in Somalia would, when necessary, be pursued forcibly in order to create a secure environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the rebuilding of political institutions.

Mr. Annan stressed that a secure environment was a sine qua non for the achievement of the humanitarian and political objectives of UNOSOM II's mandate. To ignore threats to security was to invite disaster, and possibly a return to the days when the country was in total chaos. The "distraction" caused by General Mohamed Farah Aidid and his faction could not change the Operation's mandate -- only the Security Council could do so, he said.

While recent events in Mogadishu had drawn worldwide attention, UNOSOM II had continued to deliver humanitarian assistance throughout most of Somalia when and where security conditions permitted, Mr. Annan went on to say. Meanwhile, the Operation had managed to stem the flow of refugees into neighbouring countries almost completely. He recalled that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had warned that that success might be compromised unless more troops were deployed in the border area at Doble. UNOSOM II was also continuing to rebuild Somalia's political institutions at the local level and had recently launched broad outreach programmes to keep its mission clear in the minds of Somalis.

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The Special Committee against Apartheid has said it is deeply concerned at recent indications by South Africa's Conservative Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party that they might suspend their participation in multiparty negotiations until certain demands were met. Special Committee Chairman Ibrahim A. Gambari (Nigeria) said yesterday in a statement that active participation by all parties was crucial to building on the consensus already achieved on essential constitutional principles. The critical issues to be taken up soon by the multiparty talks would, when resolved, probably lay the

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foundation for a new constitution for a democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The Special Committee appealed to the Conservative Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party to remain within the framework of the multiparty talks and to strive for a workable political settlement. Multiparty negotiations remained the best way to resolve differences, especially by preventing political violence, and to achieve a constitutional solution reflecting the aspirations of all South Africans, the statement stressed.

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